United Nations A/C.4/71/SR.1

General Assembly
Seventy-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
10 October 2016

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 29 September 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Drobnjak ..... (Croatia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees

1. **The Chair** informed the Committee that the nomination of Mr. Kullane (Somalia) for the office of Rapporteur had been endorsed by the Group of African States. He took it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Kullane (Somalia) by acclamation.

2. *It was so decided.*

3. *Mr. Kullane (Somalia) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

Organization of work (A/71/250; A/C.4/71/1; A/C.4/71/INF/1 and A/C.4/71/INF/4; A/C.4/71/L.1)

4. **The Chair** drew attention to the agenda items allocated to the Committee (A/C.4/71/1), and to the Committee's proposed programme of work (A/C.4/71/L.1). He then drew attention to the relevant rules and recommendations of the General Assembly regarding the work of the Main Committees, as contained in the report of the General Committee (A/71/250) and in Assembly decision 34/401 and resolutions 58/126 and 58/316.

5. In order to make full use of the time and conference services that had been made available to the Committee, he would convene and adjourn meetings promptly and would convene them only when there were sufficient delegations inscribed on the list of speakers. All speakers, in particular the first three at any given meeting, should be present in the Committee room on time. The Assembly had decided to continue its practice of waiving the rule that at least one quarter of the members must be present for a Main Committee meeting to be declared open.

6. On questions of procedure and organization of work, the Committee would comply strictly with the relevant provisions of General Assembly decision 34/401. In line with the time limits for explanations of vote and rights of reply, statements on points of order should be limited to 5 minutes. He suggested that statements during the general debate should not exceed 10 minutes, or 15 minutes in the case of those speaking on behalf of groups of States.

7. The Secretariat required at least 72 hours to process draft resolutions, draft decisions and amendments in all languages. With regard to the programme budget implications of proposals and rule 153 of the rules of procedure, the General Assembly had drawn attention to paragraph 12 of its decision 34/401, which made it imperative for the Main Committees to allow sufficient time for the preparation of the estimate of expenditures by the Secretariat and for its consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee. The General Committee had in turn drawn the General Assembly's attention to the fact that the Secretary-General usually needed more than the 48 hours mandated in paragraph 13 (d) of decision 34/401 to review programme budget implications.

8. Under agenda item 121, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", the Committee would adopt its provisional programme of work for the next session, pursuant to resolution 58/316, and would consider ways of streamlining its agenda, pursuant to resolution 70/305. Agenda item 135, entitled "Programme planning", had been allocated to all the Main Committees and to the plenary Assembly, in order to enhance discussion of evaluation, planning, budgeting and monitoring reports.

9. The Committee would continue the practice of holding interactive dialogues under the agenda items relating to information, outer space, peacekeeping and the effects of atomic radiation, as well as to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Additionally, under agenda item 5, entitled "Election of the officers of the Main Committees", the Committee would elect its officers at least three months before the next General Assembly session, in accordance with Assembly decisions on revitalization, particularly those in resolutions 56/509, 58/126, 69/321 and 70/305.

10. He took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work (A/C.4/71/L.1).

11. *It was so decided.*

12. **The Chair** drew attention to the list of documents before the Committee (A/C.4/71/INF/1), all of which had already been assigned a symbol number. Following the practice of the last few years, only limited

quantities of previously issued reports would be available in the conference room. PaperSmart services would again be offered, and delegations wishing to circulate their statements electronically should, at least one hour in advance of delivery, send a copy of the statement to the dedicated PaperSmart e-mail address.

13. As at previous sessions, the Committee would set up a working group of the whole to prepare draft resolutions for submission under agenda item 48, entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space". The working group would be chaired by the delegation of Canada, which had submitted the relevant draft resolution. He took it that the Committee wished to establish the group.

14. *It was so decided.*

15. **The Chair** noted that, in approving its programme of work, the Committee had decided to hold one general debate covering all agenda items relating to decolonization, namely items 54 to 58, enabling members to speak on any or all of those agenda items at any meeting devoted to the topic.

Requests for hearings

16. **The Chair** informed the Committee that he had received 133 communications containing requests for hearings relating to the questions of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), French Polynesia, Gibraltar, New Caledonia, the United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara under item 58. He suggested that, in accordance with the usual practice, the communications should be circulated as Committee documents for consideration at a subsequent meeting.

17. *It was so decided.*

18. **The Chair** said that he had also received communications from the President of French Polynesia, the Chief Minister of Gibraltar and the Vice-President of the Government of New Caledonia, who wished to address the Committee under agenda item 58. Their statements would be scheduled accordingly.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.